

## MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

### I. WILD AND TAME DOGS

The familiar relations existing between wild dogs and one's own pets was published for the first time in 'Wild Animals in Central India' in 1923, viz. 28 years ago.

Winterbotham's letter in Volume 50, No. 1, so far as I am aware, is the first confirmation of my remarks which has been published. As regards Winterbotham's experience I have no doubt that had all his dogs retreated, the wild dogs would have followed them up right to his very feet.

As it was, the wild dogs stayed to fraternise and gambol with the larger dog who was not afraid and had stayed behind.

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### 2. CHITAL [*AXIS AXIS* (ERXL.)]: A STRANGE ATTRACTION

During my years in the Indian jungles I have often been puzzled by the strange attraction the sound of a hand-saw has for the chital and wonder if any of the Society's members can throw some light on the subject.

In Ganjam, Kalahandi, Jeypore Samasthanam (all in Orissa) and in Bastar, I have more than once surprised chital near sawing benches in the forests. In all of these several instances the deer has been attentively facing toward the sound of the sawing, its ears pricked forward listening as it occasionally takes a step toward the source of the sound as if to get closer and discover the agency responsible.

In Belgarh, Ganjam, one of my mates—Ronoo Gond—has actually led me quietly to a bench where a pair of sawyers in his file have continued sawing through a log whilst we have stood near them watching a chital stag staring and listening to them from a distance of some forty feet, only turning to disappear into the undergrowth when we moved towards him. I have brought up this strange habit of the deer with Oriya, Khond, Gond and Muria sawyers, who all confirm the fact that—for some reason unknown to them—chital deer are attracted by 'the crying of the saw' (literal translation). Some of them affirm that chital have been shot due to this trait of curiosity, but I have no concrete proof of any such shooting though it is certainly possible.

The nearest natural jungle noise that a hand-saw cutting through timber resembles is the 'sawing' or calling of the Leopard (*Panthera pardus*) and it may be this sound association that attracts the chital into finding out the source of the sound, though why the deer should stand and gaze at the sawyers as if hypnotised is not understandable especially as it is an extremely alert animal, more so in Orissa where the local villager and his crop-protection gun, blunderbuss and match-lock musket are continually blazing at it, in season and out, doe, fawn